

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 NSC-05
MMO-01 SIG-01 OMB-01 USIE-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00
/062 R

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-----130051Z 023737 /63

O 130040Z JAN 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL NATO CAPITALS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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HOLD FOR OPENING OF BUSINESS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MNUC NATO PFOR

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE PAPER ON THEATER
-- NUCLEAR FORCES

1. THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE (CBO) RECENTLY RELEASED
A BUDGET ISSUE PAPER ON THEATER NUCLEAR FORCES WHICH ARGUES
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THAT WHILE MODERNIZATION OF THEATER NUCLEAR WEAPONS MAY BE
DESIRABLE FOR TECHNICAL REASONS, THEY ARE NOT AN EFFECTIVE
SUBSTITUTE FOR ADEQUATE NATO CONVENTIONAL FORCES, PARTICULARLY IF SOVIET FIRST USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IS NOT CLEARLY
DETERRED. THE STUDY CONCLUDES IT MAY BE DESIRABLE TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE A NUMBER OF US NUCLEAR SYSTEMS IN EUROPE.
THE STUDY, ONE OF SIX SUCH STUDIES ON US GENERAL PURPOSE

FORCES PLANNING, AS CITED IN THE WASHINGTON POST JANUARY 9, AND HAS BEEN PICKED UP BY WIRE SERVICES. THIS MESSAGE SUMMARIZES ITS MAIN POINTS AND PROVIDES GUIDANCE FOR RESPONDING TO QUERIES, IF ANY, FROM THE ALLIES OR THE PRESS ABOUT IT.

2. THE CBO STUDY WAS REPORTEDLY DESIGNED TO SUPPORT CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATION OF THEATER NUCLEAR FORCES IMPROVEMENTS. THE STUDY ARGUES THAT NATO PRESENTLY HAS TWO CONTRADICTIONARY CONCEPTS FOR TNF EMPLOYMENT -- BATTLEFIELD

SUPPORT AND INTERDICTION/DEEP STRIKE -- AND ASSERTS THAT CONGRESS IS BEING ASKED TO AUTHORIZE BOTH CAPABILITIES WITHOUT ASSURANCE THAT BOTH ARE ESSENTIAL. MOREOVER, SEVERAL OF THE SYSTEMS DEPLOYED TO PROVIDE THESE CAPABILITIES ARE HIGHLY VULNERABLE AND OF MARGINAL UTILITY. THE STUDY CONCLUDES THAT TNF ARE NOT AN EFFECTIVE SUBSTITUTE FOR CONVENTIONAL FORCES, WHICH MUST BE SUFFICIENTLY STRONG TO STAND ALONE, AND SERIOUSLY QUESTIONS PLANNING FOR INITIAL USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS TO SUPPLEMENT CONVENTIONAL DEFENSE. INSTEAD, IT PROPOSES THAT THE MAIN ROLE OF TNF IS TO DETER A SOVIET FIRST STRIKE IN EUROPE, AND US MODERNIZATION EFFORTS SHOULD BE FOCUSED ON STEPS TO IMPROVE TNF SURVIVABILITY AND SECOND STRIKE CAPABILITY.

3. THE STUDY CALLS FOR THE REDUCTION OR ELIMINATION OF A NUMBER OF SYSTEMS (HONEST JOHN, ADM, NIKE HERCULES, QRA FORCES) AND STATES A CLEAR PREFERENCE FOR RELIANCE ON SEABORNE AND MORE SURVIVABLE LAND-BASED DETERRENT STRIKE SYSTEMS. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TEMS. THE STUDY RECOGNIZES THAT REDUCTION OR ELIMINATION OF SOME SYSTEMS OR PARTICIPATION ARRANGEMENTS COULD POSE SERIOUS POLITICAL PROBLEMS WITH THE ALLIES, AND IT ADMITS THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LEVEL OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN EUROPE. NEVERTHELESS, THE STUDY QUESTIONS WHETHER THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PRESENT TNF POSTURE, THE ALLEGED CONFUSION IN DOCTRINE FOR THEATER NUCLEAR EMPLOYMENT, AND THE DANGERS OF SOVIET PREEMPTION OR NUCLEAR RETALIATION AGAINST AN INITIAL USE BY NATO ARE NOT OVERRIDING.

4. IF QUERIED ABOUT THE STUDY, MISSION SHOULD MAKE CLEAR TO ALLIES WHO MAY EXPRESS CONCERN THAT THE CBO IS AN ARM OF THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH AND ITS VIEWS DO NOT REPRESENT THE POSITION OR POLICY OF THE US GOVERNMENT, WHICH CONTINUES TO BE BASED ON THE MAINTENANCE OF NATO'S TRIAD OF STRATEGIC, THEATER NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL FORCES, AND THE STRATEGY OF FLEXIBLE RESPONSE. IF ASKED, MISSION MAY ALSO DRAW ON FOLLOWING GUIDANCE PROPOSED FOR DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN.

5. PRESS GUIDANCE: THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE IS AN AGENCY OF THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH, AND THE REPORT DOES NOT REFLECT THE VIEWS OF THE EXECUTIVE. THE THEATER NUCLEAR POSTURE PRESENTS COMPLICATED ISSUES WHICH HAVE BEEN UNDER DISCUSSION FOR A LONG TIME. THEATER NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE TRIAD OF CONVENTIONAL FORCES, THEATER NUCLEAR FORCES, AND STRATEGIC FORCES. THE US IS COMMITTED TO MAINTAINING THE STRENGTH OF ALL ELEMENTS OF THAT TRIAD IN COOPERATION WITH ITS ALLIES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, STUDIES, MILITARY CAPABILITIES, REGIONAL DEFENSE ORGANIZATIONS, NUCLEAR WEAPONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 13-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE007492
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EDNEWSOM/LM
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770012-0700
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770155/aaaabvox.tel
Line Count: 129
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5e0d05da-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3605543
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE PAPER ON THEATER -- NUCLEAR FORCES
TAGS: MNUC, PFOR, NATO
To: NATO POSTS MOSCOW
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5e0d05da-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009